

St Augustine's College, Abbeyside, Dungarvan



Admissions Policy

Mission Statement.

St Augustine's College is a caring community, committed to offering all of its students and staff a happy and safe environment in which they can work, learn, pray and play. We endeavor to facilitate the academic, personal, moral, spiritual and social development of each member of our school community. Our aim is to provide a balanced and well-rounded education for all our students.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Scope of Policy

St. Augustine's College is a co-educational day school which operates under the auspices of the Augustinian Order and within the context of Department of Education & Science regulations and programmes. Our admissions policy is made available to parents and guardians of all prospective entrants to the school. Parents/Guardians have the right to appeal a refusal to enrol a student under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998.

Rationale

An admissions policy facilitates the orderly intake of students into the school. In accordance with the Education Act

1998, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Equal Status Act 2000, schools have a statutory obligation to publish their admissions policy, i.e. to set the manner in which students are admitted to and participate in the life of the school.

Admission

We admit students who:

- have completed sixth class or its equivalent into first year (junior cycle) and other applicants into the year appropriate to their educational attainment
- are willing, in conjunction with his/her parents/guardians, to accept the school ethos and the school's Code of Conduct

Confirmation, in writing, is required that parents/guardians and the student accept the Code of Conduct. It is our policy that all students have equal opportunity to participate in the life of the school. This applies to all areas of the curriculum and to all extracurricular activities. While the Augustinian ethos prevails, we show respect for diversity of traditions, values, beliefs, languages and ways of life in society. It is our policy that the position of all students in the school be reviewed on a yearly basis, based on the student's attendance, performance and compliance with the code of conduct of the school. It is our policy to admit new students to all year groups based on their acceptance of the above points and subject to class size and sufficient resources being available in the school. First year will be limited to 116 students. The Board of Management has determined the maximum number of students by the limit recommended by the DES in practical classes (20 students in Home Economics and 24 in remaining practical classes) and depending on available resources of staffing, timetable and classroom constraints. Transition Year will be limited to a maximum of 72 students depending on available resources and demand.

The Board of Management reserves the right to increase the number enrolled in First Year, on a yearly basis subject to the number applying being sufficient for the provision of an extra class of 20 students (as determined by the maxima allowed in practical classes). Places will be offered to students in the order on the admissions waiting list and depending on available resources of staffing and timetable constraints. Parents / Guardians are requested to take out an annual personal insurance organised by the school for their child and to pay an annual general purpose contribution

to help cover the cost of examination stationery, transport to certain school games, printing and postage etc. This general-purpose contribution also incorporates the cost of the school diary and locker rental. Contact, in confidence, should be made with the Principal if special consideration is required in relation to this request.

First Year Admissions procedure:

Open Day

The Open Day for the recruitment of new students will take place on November 2013 or as near to that time as suited to the school calendar and other local events. No enrolments will be accepted before the date of the official Open Day as determined, each year, by the school authority. The closing date for application will be the Friday following the

Open Day. Application Procedure.

Students wishing to enrol into First Year in St. Augustine's College must complete an application form and return it to the Principal by the date stated at the end of the form. The Application form is available in the school during the Open Day and from the school's office after the Open Day of the enrolment year. No applications will be accepted before the Open Day. The Closing date for Application to the school will be stated on the application form. The closing date for applications will usually be the Friday (3:45pm) after the Open Day. Then following the specified closing date for applications the following stages will apply: All applications will be processed by the Principal and the school's administration staff adhering to the admissions criteria listed below.

Admissions Criteria in descending order by the date of application (Friday at 3:45pm following the Open Day):

1. Siblings (brothers or sisters of students of the school)
2. Sons and daughters of the staff of the college
3. Sons and daughters of college alumni
4. Nieces and nephews of members of the Augustinian Order

Should enrolment reach the maximum number of 116, adhering to the criteria above, a simple lottery will be used to determine the allocation of places and the order of any subsequent admissions waiting list. The admissions waiting list will not be final until the lottery is complete. Late applications into first year will be considered only after the current admissions waiting list is cleared and this is subject to resources and class size.

Where a number of siblings are applying for admission their application may be treated as a single unit. This is in the interest of maintaining a family unit. In the event of a lottery where this unit is successful, then all members of the unit will be accepted for admission. However, should this success result in a breach of the maximum year size, then all preceding names drawn in the lottery shall be drawn again until the number of remaining places are filled. Parents / Guardians will be informed in writing whether a place is offered to their child following a Board of

Management meeting after the closing date for applications.

Places not taken up by successful candidates will be offered to those on the admissions waiting list in numerical order.

Admissions waiting list:

Parents/Guardians of pupils on the admissions waiting list will be informed of their position/number on the waiting list. Parents/Guardians of pupils in the next place on the waiting list will continue to be informed whenever a vacancy occurs and these parents will have the option to accept or refuse the place offered to their child.

The waiting list will remain open until the last Friday in September of the year of entry. Following this date the waiting list will cease to operate for that academic year.

Late Applications waiting list:

Applications, following the closing date, as per Application Form, will be placed on a late applications waiting list in the order in which they are received and will be considered only after all other applications on the admissions waiting list have been dealt with.

As soon as is practicable, but not later than 21 days, after Parents / Guardians have provided all the relevant information, the Board of Management shall make a decision in respect of the application concerned and inform the

Parents/Guardians in writing thereof. (Education Welfare Act (Section 19 (3))).

Special Educational Needs

St. Augustine's College welcomes students with special needs and will use the resources, both financial and

personnel, provided by the Department of Education and Science to make reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities or special educational needs up to a nominal cost so that these students are free to participate in the life in the school in so far as is reasonably practicable. While recognising and fully supporting parents' rights to have a school of their choice for their children, the College's ability to accept students with particular needs is dependent on the supply of resources, suitable to the needs of the individual student, being supplied by the Department of Education and Science. The College welcomes applications from students with special educational needs unless the nature and degree of

those needs is such that to enrol the student concerned would be inconsistent with both the best interests of the student concerned and the effective provision of education for the other students with whom the student concerned is to be educated. The Board of Management must be made aware of any special needs as early as possible, so that these needs can be assessed and addressed where feasible. The Board of Management, having gathered all relevant information and professional documentation, assesses how the needs of these students can be met. Contact will be made with the National Council for Special Educational Needs regarding special needs resources to which the student may be entitled. The Principal may request a meeting with the Parents/Guardians

of the student to discuss the application and the student's needs. The Parents/Guardians of the student may request a meeting with the Principal to discuss the student's educational or other needs.

N.B. Parents are requested to outline the details of a child's special educational needs on the Application Form. It may take some time for the Department of Education and Science to process such applications. Therefore Parents / Guardians are strongly advised to discuss their particular situation with the College as early as possible.

Implementation of Admissions Policy

Our school implements its admissions policy through:

- The distribution of an up-to-date, detailed prospectus
- Visits by the Principal/Deputy Principal and Guidance Counsellor to the primary schools in West Waterford
- An annual open day to introduce the school to prospective students
- Completed application form which must be submitted by the required date as stated on the application form
- A follow-up open evening for parents/guardians of enrolled students

Admission procedure in relation to Students transferring from other Irish Second-Level Schools and equivalent institutions.

Students may transfer into the school at any time subject to:

- School's Admissions Policy
- Key information being supplied by Parent / Guardian on the School's Application Form
- The Principal and/or the Deputy Principal and other designated Teacher meeting the Parents / Guardians and the pupil requesting transfer.
- Written communication between both Principals in accordance with Section 20 of the Education (Welfare)

Act 2000 containing all relevant information about the student concerned

- The school being satisfied with the reasons for the transfer
- The school regarding the move to be in the best interests of the student
- Space and resources being available while having regard to Health and Safety legislation and all other relevant legislation
- Consultation with the Educational Welfare Officer, if appropriate

- Acceptance on the part of student and Parent /Guardian of the school's Code of Conduct

Parents / Guardians are requested to take out an annual personal insurance organised by the school for their child and to pay an annual general purpose contribution to help cover the cost of examination stationery, transport to certain school games, printing and postage etc. This general-purpose contribution also incorporates the cost of the school diary and locker rental. Contact, in confidence, should be made with the Principal if special consideration is required in relation to this request.

Transition Year Admissions Policy

Decisions in relation to applications for enrolment are made in accordance with the school's admissions policy as outlined herein. Restrictions are placed on the numbers of available places by the size of the building, the limits on class sizes and the overall number of students for which the College can cater. The intake of Transition Year students is limited to 72 students (3 classes of 24 students). This number is open to review by the Board of Management on a yearly basis.

In the event of the number of applications being less or more than 72 then the maximum number will change to ensure functioning class size. The minimum number of students in any class will be 24 students. **Admission is at all times based, first and foremost, on suitability of candidates applying and maximum numbers are based on maximum 'suitable candidates'.** The school will not at any stage be compelled to fill classes to maximum numbers even if the number of applications equals or exceeds maximum number of places.

The simple criteria below will be used to determine the allocation of places in the following order:-

1. Existing Junior Certificate students
3. Remaining applicants i.e. external applicants

Where the number of applicants exceeds the number of available places, a system of selection will apply with a waiting list being established from this selection. Candidates will be informed of their place on the waiting list. If a place becomes available subsequently, it will be offered to the first person on the waiting list at that time.

Suitability of Candidates.

Students who are seen as unsuitable for the Transition Year programme or whose interests are judged by the school as being better served by proceeding to the Leaving Certificate Programme, shall be directed to progress to Fifth Year.

Student suitability will be based on:

- School Records (attendance, behaviour, academic and performance)
- Input from teachers, class teachers and year head
- Interview

Student will only be interviewed if the student's school record and teacher's input deems the student in the unsuitable category. The interview will be conducted by the Transition Year Coordinator along with a Class Teacher and a member of the Management team. Parent / Guardian will be present at the interview.

Enrolment Procedure

a) Internal Applicants

Only applications from the present Junior Certificate class at St. Augustine's College will be processed in the first round. If the number of suitable candidates does not exceed the number of available places then applications will be accepted from the other candidates' i.e. external applicants. If the number of suitable candidates exceeds the number of available places, then a lottery based selection will be applied.

Teachers will be asked to flag any student, regardless of numbers, who they feel may not be suitable (based on third year official staff room records or teacher class records) All students flagged will be interviewed. If more students apply than places, it will be the decision of the interview board as to who will get a place. Successful candidates will be notified by post and must return the acceptance form with the appropriate deposit before the closing date to secure a place on the Transition Year programme. Any place not accepted by the closing date will be offered to the next candidate on the waiting list.

b) External Applicants

Once the internal waiting list is cleared by cut-off date places will be offered to external applicants.

All the external candidates will be interviewed to assess suitability as per transfers from other schools (see above). Places will be awarded based on interview scores and in accordance with the school's admissions policy.

Parent – Student Responsibility Statement

In accordance with the Education Welfare Act, S 23(4), parents of prospective students will be provided with a copy of the school's Code of Conduct and they will be required to confirm in writing that the Code of Conduct is acceptable to them and that they shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure compliance with such code by the student, as long as he/she is attending the school.

Our Code of Conduct specifies:

- The standards of behaviour that shall be observed by each student attending the school and the measures that may be taken when a student fails or refuses to observe those standards
- The procedures to be followed before a student may be suspended or expelled from the school and the grounds for removing a suspension
- The procedures to be followed relating to notification of a student's absence from school
- Dress code

Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed regularly. In practice, this process should be coordinated by a core committee consisting of two staff members, two Parents / Guardians nominated by the Parents' Association and two students in consultation with the wider school community. On-going review and evaluation should take cognisance of changing information, legislation, developments in the school based programme and feedback from parents/guardians, staff and students. The policy should be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning.

Appeal

The Board of Management of the school shall not refuse to admit a student to the school, except where such refusal is in accordance with the admissions policy of the school.

In the event of a student's application for admission to the school being refused the Parents / Guardian have a right to appeal, in the first instance, to the Board of Management of the school. The Board of Management may make provision to meet the Parents / Guardians or the Parents / Guardians may request to meet the Board of Management at a subsequent meeting of the Board. The Parents / Guardians will be informed in writing of the Board's decision, and the reasons for that decision. The right to appeal will be restated and the Parents / Guardians will be advised of the subsequent procedures for appeals to the Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science, (Education Act 1998, Section 29 (d).)

The Parents' / Guardians' appeal should be stated on the application form provided by the Department of Education and Science (Circular M48/01). The appeal must be made within 42 calendar days from the date that the decision of the Board of Management was notified to the parents/guardians concerned. (Circular, M48/01). An appeal may be made to: The Secretary General of the Department of Education and Science, The Appeals

Administration Unit, Department of Education and Science, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.
Policy ratified by all partners – Teaching Staff; Students; Parents' Association and the Board of Management
Date:

3 March 2015